

Appl. No. : 10/777,401
Filed : February 12, 2004

REMARKS

Claims 1-21 are pending in the above-captioned application. Upon entry of the foregoing amendments, Claims 3-15 and 22-24 remain pending, New Claims 22-24 having been added and Claims 1, 2, and 16-21 having been canceled without prejudice to their further prosecution in a continuation application.

Allowed Claims

Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's assertion that Claims 9-15 are allowed.

Objection to the Claims

Claims 3-8 stand objected to as depending from a rejected base claim. Applicant gratefully acknowledges the Examiner's assertion that Claims 3-8 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant has amended Claims 3 and 4 in independent form including all the limitations of the rejected base claim. Claims 5-8 depend from amended Claim 4. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 3-8 are not in condition for allowance and respectfully request the withdrawal of the Examiner's objection to these claims.

Rejection of the Claims

Claims 1, 2 and 16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Carmo (U.S. Pat. No. 5,393,243). In order to further prosecution of the present application, Applicant has canceled Claims 1, 2, and 16 without prejudice to their further prosecution in a continuation application. With regard to originally filed Claims 17-21, which depend from Claim 16, Applicant believes these claims to be allowable, though the Examiner did not comment on Claims 17-21 in the outstanding Office Action. Nonetheless, in order to further prosecution of the present application, Applicant has also canceled Claims 17-21 without prejudice to their further prosecution in a continuation application.

New Claims 22-24

Applicant has added new Claims 22-24, which depend from amended Claim 3. In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 22-24 are also in condition for allowance.

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that the pending claims are in condition for allowance and respectfully requests the expeditious issuance of a Notice of Allowance for these claims. The undersigned has made a good faith effort to respond to all of the rejections in the case and to place the claims in condition for immediate allowance. Nevertheless, if any undeveloped issues remain or if any issues require clarification, the Examiner is respectfully requested to call Applicant's attorney in order to resolve such issue promptly.

Please charge any additional fees, including any fees for additional extension of time, or credit overpayment to Deposit Account No. 11-1410.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: May 24, 2005

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AMEND

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